

Local Agency Conference Call Minutes

February 4, 2016

Beginning at 9:00am

Attendees: All agencies present except Lewis and Clark and Crow Agency

State Staff: Kate Girard, Leah Steinle, Kelly Aughney, Kevin Moore, Glade Roos, Dick Michaelis, Mike Field, Blair Hendricks, Lacy Little, Chris Fogelman

Agenda Items

State Update/Announcements (Kate)

Funding- general notes (OA, reallocation, infrastructure, contract...)-WIC has several sources of funding throughout the year. We get our regular grant (NSA money) that is in your contracts. Regular contract money should be budgeted to cover staffing, supplies, training, etc.

We also have OA and Infrastructure grant opportunities presented a couple of times a year from FNS. These are based on money available and are usually associated with high level priorities (i.e. increasing access to services, increasing breastfeeding rates, etc.). We generally apply for money through OA for “caseload maintenance” which essentially helps us balance our budget and is already included in your contracts. When we put out a call for grant requests in the newsletter, usually we are looking for big ticket items that you cannot normally afford in your regular budget (renovations, projects, new office furniture...). We will field questions and let you know if what you are asking for fits with the grant request and whether or not it can be submitted. We should be hearing soon about another possible infrastructure grant opportunity and we would like you to keep an eye out for any big projects you would like to request money for. Last year we received 2 grants that were good for 2 fiscal cycles. We are currently using one for breastfeeding promotion (the conference, Loving Support training, CLC certifications and IBCLC exams...) and the other for outreach and development of the participant training video.

Reallocation is sometimes offered to states throughout the year and this just goes toward regular grant money. If we end up getting enough funds we will also offer to amend contracts and include extra money based on need.

Conference Funding- This year in your contracts there was money included to cover travel to the state conference. Small agencies got \$1000, medium \$1500 and large \$2000. However, since we are using our Breastfeeding Infrastructure grant to cover most travel, you may not have to use your own budget. We are asking all local agencies to submit the “application” that was posted in the newsletter on Monday (2/1/16) specifying who they would like to send. We will look at the requests and the grant money and determine if we can cover everyone out of that or the PC funds we have at the state. The money in your grant designated for training and travel should still go to that line item though (other conferences, online classes, etc.).

New Employee Training- coming up March 21st-23rd – our team, headed by Lacy, is busy planning for our next New Employee Training in March. The sign up deadline has passed but we are not at full capacity, so if you have new staff, please contact Lacy. There is some pre-work that needs to be done, so leave time to prepare.

Vendor (Leah/Kevin/Glade)

- Please make sure to work on your retail monitoring
- Compliance buys are underway
- EBT Updates – Complete with Phase I, working on design now. UPC collection starting. There will be a presentation about EBT at the Spring Conference. Some local agency staff and state staff are testing M-SPIRIT for EBT functionality. We are on-schedule to pilot in February of 2017 and go-live with the whole state May 2017.

Admin (Kelly)

- Time study Reminder
 - Deadline tomorrow!
- Civil Rights
 - As a reminder, for new staff (there are a couple of you) you must complete civil rights training upon hire and then annually.
- Medicaid expansion
 - The expansion is 138% of poverty level, so it shouldn't affect WIC eligibility. If a participant has a Blue Cross Blue Shields card, you can still verify eligibility is SIS.

Nutrition (Chris/Lacy)

Infant Bloodwork- 9 months

Perform the hemoglobin test on infants at the last visit before their certification ends and prior to their first birthday. **Please note this correction--the hemoglobin test for the infant can be around 9 months of age to aid in scheduling services and before their first birthday.** (Meaning it does not exactly have to be 9 months or later).

Risk codes- newsletter, CPA assigned (do not remove)

Risk codes- There has been some questions regarding risk code definitions and when to apply them. We have started highlighting a new risk code every week in the newsletter. If there is any risk codes that you would like to see, contact Lacy.

Risk Codes- When a risk code is CPA assigned at a certification appointment, DO NOT remove later during the certification period if it is resolved. Please document in the note that the risk factor has been resolved. The only risk code that should be removed is 401, since it cannot be assigned with any other risk code. If you need additional clarification, please contact the state office.

Planning for Webinars...

As a result of the survey, there was an idea to provide quarterly webinars on topics specific to our staff. We are hoping that we can have a group to represent the local staff members, which will work with the state office to come up with specific topics of interest. Topics could include, nutrition topics, SOAP notes, self-chart audits, etc. If you are interested in participating in this, please contact Lacy.

Alimentum powdered can size change

Alimentum is changing the label and size of can. The can size will be changing from 16 oz to 12.1oz. This will be a change that will occur over a 4/5 month time span (April-July/August). The old information vs. the new information is listed below.

Formula Type	Can Size	Age	Partially BF/Full	Substantially BF
Alimentum: Reconstituted 115oz	16oz Can (old)	0-3 months	7 cans	0-1 month 1 can, 2-3 months 3 cans
		4-5 months	8 cans	4 cans
		6-11 months	6 cans	3 cans
Alimentum : Reconstituted 87oz	12oz Can (NEW)	0-3 months	10 cans	0-1 month 1 can. 2-3 months 5 cans
		4-5 months	11 cans	6 cans
		6-11 months	8 cans	4 cans

There are two different options for everyone at this time.

1. You as a local agency can stay up to date with your local stores. You will be responsible for knowing when the new can size comes to your stores. You will be responsible for assigning the correct can size for the participant on their checks.
2. At the state office a data pull has occurred for all participants who currently use Alimentum. With that data pull, I have estimated what formula your agency needs will be for the time range of the formula change. I can work with the clinics on how much to order and when.

We highly recommend option two at this time for several reasons. First, trying to figure out when the stores switch over in your area will require additional time on your part. You will have to call the stores when assigning food packages, to know what can size to print on the participant's vouchers. Second, your agency may assign a can size and the store the participant goes to may not have that size. Then the participant has to come back to your agency to get new checks. Third, if cashiers and participants get confused at checkout and allow the purchase of too many cans, the retailer will not be fully reimbursed, which is bad for retailer relations and you will also need to fill out a Compliance Form for the participant.

Neosure label change

See attached page for photos. This will also appear in the newsletter.

Survey Results

- Survey purpose is to assess (in order to improve) the working relationships with local WIC agencies by gathering feedback through an online survey and phone interviews.
- Survey was completed by 100 local staff (76% response rate) 17 interviews were conducted. Highest survey response rate was from CPAs (40%) and from staff from small clinics (38%).
- Most survey respondents receive clarification/explanation of policy questions (73%), have their requests/concerns responded to in a timely manner (85%), and are comfortable communicating their requests/concerns with state staff (81%).
- Almost everyone found the weekly newsletter to be an effective way to stay updated on policy changes, while only 69% felt the website is effective at doing this.
- We learned a lot about our customer service from the comments on the survey:
 - Consistent positive statements about the WIC Help Desk (“patient,” “kind,” “helpful,” “friendly”).
 - Consistent negative statements about other State Staff’s communications (inconsistent policy guidance, condescending tone, lack of appreciation and respect for in-clinic challenges).
- The survey and interviews illuminated many themes of issues, and we have identified some actions we can take to help address those:
 - State staff will engage in customer service training (improve consistency, clarity, tone, attitude of communications)
 - Simplify/clarify State Plan policies
 - Develop training resource for monitoring process
 - Request more feedback from locals
 - Respect that locals are on the front lines of WIC
 - Use quizzes to improve understanding of SPIRIT
- State staff is finalizing write-ups from both the online survey and phone interviews that include a comprehensive description of the questions, the response rates, and the responses. These will be made available to all local staff when they are ready.

Income eligibility- Income “workaround” (Kelly)

- Due to our Federal Management Evaluation, we have to manually validate income with one frequency.
- SPIRIT is set to “annualize” all income, and we are unable to change SPIRIT.
- The “workaround” is to compare income with one frequency to the Income Eligibility Guidelines (IEG), instead of using SPIRIT.
- However, if income is on multiple frequencies, then you can allow SPIRIT to annualize.
- Going forward, this will be checked at biennial monitoring visits.
- Please have your Income Eligibility Guidelines (IEG) at your desk for appointments

- If you need to print one, they are located under clinic admin resources on the state's website.

Voter Registration Update (Kelly)

- Montana WIC is not in compliance with The National Voter Registration Act
- Voter registration must be offered at all certs, re-certs and address changes
- Every applicant is required to see, in writing, a "disclaimer" about their voting rights. They must sign it for their understanding, and indicate if they want to register to vote or not.
- The new "disclaimer" will be posted on the website after this conference call.
- You will need to add the household # when filling out the form. This way, it can be applied to the entire Household, and they only have to scan it once. The form itself would not appear in scanned docs for all family members, however, this is a short cut to scanning it into each participants' chart.
- Please print (or laminate) and scan into participant charts
- Comment is "Voter Registration or VR"
- We will be checking this on our biennial monitoring visits
- Will be a finding starting October 1, 2016
- If you need voter registration forms, please contact your local voter registration office

SPIRIT ISSUES/UPDATES/REMINDERS (Kate)

2-Way Links (and cert of both mom and baby)- please make sure mom's and babies are linked 2 ways. The easiest way to do this is to complete mom's cert first. If there is only a one way (or no) link, then it can affect food packages, breastfeeding amount updates, and possibly participation. We get calls in the helpdesk where the root of the problem tends to be this link.

Changes in BF amounts- Make sure to change BF amounts accurately and before you issue food packages. If a baby changes to formula from breastfeeding, make sure to issue mom and baby accordingly. It is still OK to leave mom's current benefits alone, but you must switch out future benefits to match the correct level. This shows up on over issuance and in monitoring.

Data integrity- please make sure data entered is correct. For instance, if the notes say mom plans to stop breastfeeding in a few weeks when she returns to work, please to do not mark "stopped BF" that day. Wait until she has actually acted on it.

Mid-cert assessment timing, button available- reminder to try and line up the family together with baby as driver. If the button is not available, use the folders (nutrition assessment, ht/wt/hgb and SOAP notes) to enter information.

Issuance based on time of month (3 or 4 months?)- When you certify a participant, SPIRIT recommends the current month plus 3 months of benefits. Since we are on "month to month" (first to last day of month cycle) please try to keep it as close to 3 months of benefits as possible. So if you are issuing on the 4th of the month, please issue current plus 2 months. If it is late in the month, issue current plus 3 months. This will help allow for quarterly education and keeping

them on track. Ultimately it is your discretion based on scheduling, this is just a recommendation to make sure other appts end up happening when they should.

Certs around the first birthday- reminder than you CAN cert within 30 days of 1st birthday and get the 1 year cert period. Know that you will have infant codes, questions and food package. But this is a nice option if scheduling is an issue.

New Labels

New Look



13.1oz



13.1oz

New Look and New Size



16oz



12.1oz

